

DEFINE LOVE



Starman by AnorakTheAllKnowing

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Summary: In 1977 Voyager II was launched into space, inviting any life forms who discover it to visit planet Earth. Seven years later, Jane Hopper's life gets changed forever when she meets a strange boy, unlike any she's ever met before.

1. Chapter 1

2014

A woman in her forties with shoulder-length red hair, walks up the stairs to her son's bedroom, when she reaches the door, she opens it and enters the room. "Ryan?" she asks looking around for any sign of him, "Ryan?" she hears a sound from inside the closet, she opens the closet and finds her five year old son sitting in his pyjamas and clutching his teddy bear close to his chest, a sad expression on his face.

She gets down so that she is level with him. He is practically identical to her, the only major difference, is his white hair and bright pink skin and bright blue eyes.

"Ryan?" she asks, "What are you doing in here? It's bedtime and you've got kindergarten tomorrow."

"I don't want to go," he says in a sad tone, "they bully me because I'm a freak."

"You're not a freak, you're just... different, okay? and there's nothing wrong with that being different is awesome."

"How?"

She sighs, "How about this, if you come out I'll tell a story about someone I knew who was different, way more different than you, and had a massive impact on someone who was very close to me, sound good?"

Ryan's expression brightens and he nods his head rapidly. He exits the closet and quickly jumps into his bed. His mother stands, shuts the closet doors, and turns to face her son, "Scoot over then," he moves over slightly so she can lay on her side next to him.

"Now this happened 30 years ago, I was thirteen, and my best friend was a girl called Jane Hopper, she wasn't the most open of people, she had been through a lot, but then we met a boy who... wasn't

really a boy at all, we called him Mike, and meeting him, changed everything."

2. Chapter 2

30 years earlier...

Summer 1984

Jane Hopper lays on her bed, her walkman clipped on her trousers, playing Starman by David Bowie through her headphones, she looks over at the picture frames on her bedside cabinet, inside them are pictures of her mother and father, Terry and Jim. Her expression becomes slightly sadder, she puts the index and middle fingers of her right hand against her lips, and presses them gently to her mom's picture, "Love you Mom," and then does the same to her dad's, "love you Dad."

It is at this moment that her best friend Max bursts into her room. After her parents died in a car crash that she had miraculously survived, she was left an orphan, but her best friend Max had managed, after many attempts, to convince her family to take her in, something Jane would be eternally grateful for. The two girls were practically sisters, which Max was more than okay with, considering what her real family were like.

She had a father who treated her brother like shit, a brother who treated her and Jane like shit, and a mother who wasn't a religious fanatic, but close enough to be considered one, who pretty much treated everyone like shit. They were definitely a far cry from Jane's parents, who were two of the most loving and caring people alive. Max could tell how much Jane missed them, having shut herself off, not wanting to talk about it all, Max knew this was unhealthy, but also that she needed to give her time, she would come around eventually, yes it had nearly been a year since the accident, but no one ever said that getting over watching your parents die was going to be easy. She just needed time, that was all.

Jane sits up, takes her headphones off her ears, and lets them rest around her neck, "Yeah?"

"Get up off your ass the movie's gonna start soon!"

...

The girls run through the entrance of the Starcourt Mall and towards the escalators, Rocket Man by Elton John is playing over the tannoy. They hurry down, pushing past people and apologising as they do. They make their way to Scoops Ahoy, meeting Robin at the counter.

"Hey dingus," Robin calls to the window behind her, "your kids are here." The window hatch slides open, and Steve Harrington stands there looking annoyed, "Again?"

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He leads the girls into a corridor behind the store that will allow them into the theatre without waiting in line.

"Remember, tell anyone about this and-"

"We're dead," they both say in unison.

...

A few miles outside of Hawkins, a family drives down a forest road, when suddenly something bright comes out of nowhere and stops right in front of them. The father slams on the brakes and they all stare in shock at whatever this thing is.

In front of the car there is a ball of white light, about the size of a tennis ball, floating in midair. It moves towards the car, the occupants staring at it in fear, it moves round to the back, and sees a teenage boy with shaggy black hair and freckles on his face looking back at it. The ball moves in closer towards his face, as if it's staring at him intensely, trying to memorise every detail. After it's finished, it whizzes off into the woods.

Eventually the ball stops, and starts to expand, until it isn't in the shape of a ball, but the shape of a person. The light goes out completely, and in the place where the ball was, stands the same boy from in the car, wearing the same blue t-shirt, dark hoodie and jeans. The boy looks at his hands, his eyes wide with amazement, he starts patting his entire body and face, trying to get used to being able to

feel his body. His hands reach the top of his head, feeling a full head of hair, he grabs one of the strands and tries to pull it down in front of his face to see what it is.

After he's finished looking over his new body, he starts making his way through the woods, to start his mission.

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A man in a military suit walks through the corridor of a government, two other men flanking him. On the man's shoulders are four stars, giving him the rank of a general. He enters a room full of scientists and consoles littered with screens and control switches. He approaches one of the scientists.

"Alexei," the scientist in question turns at the call of his name, "this better be good."

"Trust me Comrade-General, it is," he says in a thick Russian accent, a smile of excitement on his face.

"No need to call me comrade son, you're a US citizen now all that Commie crap should be beneath you."

"Right, sorry sir," he points to the console he was just at, "This way gentlemen."

The officers follow him to the console, when they reach it he directs their gaze to a screen with a large wavy pattern on it.

"So what exactly are looking at here Doc?"

"Our satellites picked up something entering the atmosphere, we don't what it is, but what we do know is that the energy it's emitting is... unlike anything we've ever seen before, it's producing more energy than both the nuclear power stations of the USSR and the USA combined."

"So what your is saying is this thing has enough energy to power this country and help us keep the lights on for a very long time?"

"Yes."

The general raises his eyebrows, this is good after all, "And where is this thing?"

"We don't know, but since we picked it up on our satellites it has to be close."

The general smiles and holds out his hand to Alexei. Alexei grabs hold of the general's hand and shakes hands with him, "Congratulations Doc, you might just be an American hero."

Alexei smiles, liking the sound of that.

3. Chapter 3

Jane and Max walk out of the mall, both of them wearing different expressions on their faces, for Jane it is satisfaction, for Max it is disappointment, "What a load of shit."

"I thought it was okay."

"Come on it was just Star Wars with the ships being made by a computer."

"How was that anything like Star Wars?"

Max looks up in thought, "Oh I don't know how about because the protagonist is bored with his life, becomes a space pilot, and fights against an evil empire out in-"

"Max look out!"

Max's gaze returns to what's in front of her, just as a car whizzes past, only missing her because of Jane's arm blocking her path.

"Jesus that was close, thanks," she turns to look at Jane, who is wide eyed and hyperventilating, "Jane? Jane are you okay?"

Jane shakes her rapidly, still looking out in front of her, "I... I... I... can't breathe."

Max takes her hands and turns her towards her, but her gaze is still on the road, "Jane. Jane look at me," Jane finally looks at her, "Breathe with me, okay like this," she starts demonstrating breathing in through the nose and out through the mouth, "Come on breathe."

She joins in the breathing practice, in through the nose, out through the mouth, eventually calming down.

"You good?"

"Yeah, yeah I'm okay, thanks."

"I should've been looking I'm sorry."

"No no it's not your fault, it's just... you know, but I'm good now," it's at that moment they hear sniggers from behind them, and turn to see Carol and her minion friends, "What's wrong Janie? the car scare you? not surprising given your history with cars," the girls erupt into laughter, Jane and Max scowl at them.

"Why are you wearing a long sleeved shirt in summer huh?" asks the blonde to Carol's left, "is it because-" she mimics dragging a blade across her wrist, "-you're trying to hide something?"

The brunette to Carol's right snorts, "Or maybe she's recovering from her Anorexia, and she doesn't want everyone to see how bony her arms still are, did I guess right Little Miss Skeletor?"

Max's face fills with anger, "Oh this bitch..." she moves to attack, but Jane stops her, "Ignore them Max, let's just go home," they turn around start off home, "Watch the roads Jane, wouldn't want another car accident would we?"

That is it for Max, she has now snapped, she stops walking and turns to face them, "Hey Carol, let me ask you something?" Jane turns at the sound of her friends voice, and sees her facing the bullies, "What's it like?"

Carol is confused, "What's what like?"

"Oh you know, having six different STDs. I mean if the rumours that you've had sex with nearly every guy on the football team are true then you must have a lot by now right? hell I'm willing to bet that it's been impaled so many times that's it glowing green like some radioactive shit," she nods her head in the direction of her crotch, "am I right?" Carol and her minions look at her with shocked expressions, while Jane is trying to keep in her laughter.

Max turns her attention to the blonde, "And you Christine, you're gonna make jokes about self-harm?" she laughs, but there is no humour to it at all, "that's rich, considering the fact that you tried to kill yourself with a knife," she turns to the brunette, "And you Samantha, you wanna talk about weight and appearance? okay, then should we talk about that eating disorder you had, you know? the one that gave you the size and appearance of Jabba the friggin Hutt, I

mean we could, but you know what? we're not going to, because I'm nice like that, but I will say this, you're lucky guys find you all attractive, because there's nothing up here," she says tapping the side of her head, she then waves, "See ya later," she turns back to Jane, "Come on sis," wraps her arm around hers, and they both walk off, leaving the bullies standing with shocked faces and mouths hanging open.

The two girls look at each other and burst into laughter, running off as they do.

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In the woods, the boy continues on his walk, but stops when he hears a noise. He looks around, trying to find the source, and he hears it again, coming from the ground. He looks down a small feathered creature with wings laying on the ground with a broken wing, ready to die. He looks at it sadly, whatever it is, it's hurt.

He crouches down so he can scoop it up in his hands, after he has, he holds his right over it, and a ball of white light surrounds the creature, and holds for five seconds, before disappearing entirely. Once it has, he moves his right hand away, and the creature stands on it's two little feet, completely healed. The boy smiles down at it, and tweets at him, as if it's saying thank you, before flying up to a tree, his saviour's gaze following him. The boy stands, and, content that the... whatever it is is okay, he marches on.

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Eventually, he exits the woods, and sees a road. He steps onto it and stamps his feet, this stuff is really hard. He gets onto his hands and knees and lowers his face towards a black mark on the road, at first he sniffs it, and then, opens his mouth, licks the mark, and proceeds to cringe at the taste. He stands and wipes his tongue with his hands in an attempt to get rid of the taste, while doing this he notices a sign that reads,

WELCOME TO HAWKINS

He furrows his brow in confusion and approaches, stopping right in

front of it. He reaches his hand out and feels the metal, he then clenches his fist and hits it hard, causing it to emit a clanging sound. The boy backs away slightly, his eyes wide with fear, as if he's upset some kind of beast that's now going to eat him. When the sign does nothing, he carefully moves around so as not to upset it again, having done so, he quickly walks off, which then turns into a full on sprint in the direction of the town.

4. Chapter 4

Max is sitting in her room with Jane, the two of them having a conversation that you wouldn't consider typically female, "Green Lantern is so much better than Iron Man," Max argues, sitting cross legged at the top of the bed.

"How?" Jane asks, laying across the bottom of the bed.

"Iron Man doesn't have any powers, he just has a metal suit, Green Lantern, on the other hand, has a ring that can project what he imagines through willpower."

"Yes but Iron Man built his suit, he actually worked for his abilities, as far as I can tell all Hal Jordan had to do was have strong will and then he was given the ring."

"You literally know nothing about Hal Jordan!"

"And you literally know nothing about Tony Stark! End of conversation!"

After a few seconds of silence between the girls, Jane looks over at her friend, "Thanks by the way, for doing what you did at the mall."

"Don't mention it, besides, I quite enjoy giving bullies a taste of their own medicine," she says smiling at Jane, who smiles back, "I hope they didn't get to you too much?"

"You know me, it's like water off a duck's back."

"Jane, when are you going to talk to someone about this?"

Jane sighs, "Max-"

"I know, I know, we've had this conversation before but, what your doing is unhealthy and I know you've starting cutting yourself again I can see the bloodstains on your shirts."

Jane is now getting agitated, "Max, please-"

"Jane you know can talk to me I may be able to help-"

"No Max, you won't!" She says quickly sitting up, "You don't understand, no one does, I have felt like this for nearly a year and I'm going to probably to feel like this for the rest of shitty messed up life, because every time because every time I try to talk about this shit, it hurts, the pain is unbearable," tears start to fill her eyes, "the group therapy sessions didn't work, the solo therapy sessions didn't work, and I doubt talking to you will work either!"

Max opens her mouth to speak, but is cut off, "No Max! I don't care if your parents are divorced, that's different, you still have them to lose, and I hope you don't, I hope you never feel this pain, but don't think for a single second that you understand how I feel, and don't try to tell me how to grieve, how I let out my emotions is my goddamn business, not yours, so do me a favour, and stay the hell out of it Max!"

She gets up from the bed, opens the door, and leaves the room, she walks to her bedroom door, opens it, steps in the room, slams the door, and sinks to floor, now full on sobbing. She then starts hitting the sides of her head in anger, "You idiot, you idiot."

She stands and walks to her bedside cabinet, she pulls open the top drawer, and pulls a small razor blade, she rolls up her right sleeve, and starts slashing at her arm, saying the word stupid every time she makes a cut, "Stupid! Stupid! Stupid!" When she's done she puts the razor back in the draw before pushing it shut, her eyes lift to the pictures of her parents, she becomes more upset and sinks to her knees in front of them, "Why did you leave me? Why? I can't do this without you," she takes a few breaths to try and compose herself before continuing, "I don't know if you're even listening wherever you are guys are but, please, I need help, it doesn't have to be you guys personally but, please, just, send something or someone to help me, please?" She looks down, "This is stupid."

She gets up from the floor and lays down on her to cry herself to sleep, not caring how much of her blood will stain the sheets.

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The boy stumbles upon a gas station a small distance from the town, he looks up in wonderment at the big sign that reads 7-ELEVEN.

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He walks in through the doors, looking around at everything with wide eyes. He moves to the back of the store, and comes several glass doors, behind them are bottles and cans. He looks through one of them and sees several cans with the word TAB written on them, he opens the door and grabs one, he looks outside the store and sees two teenagers laughing and talking, one of them is holding the same can as the boy. The boy watches closely as the teenager lifts a small piece of metal on the top of the can, and lifts the can to his mouth. The boy copies this action and his eyes widen at the taste. He quickly gulps the drink, throws the can on the floor, and turns around to see what else there is.

His eyes land on an orange box that says Reese's Pieces, he grabs one, opens it, and like with the drink, pours the contents into his mouth. Once again, his eyes widen at the taste, and he downs the pieces. He grabs another box of the candy, another can of the drink, and calmly exits the store to continue on his mission.

5. Chapter 5

Jane lies awake in bed, regretting what she said earlier, it was stupid, she was stupid. She gets out of bed, and heads for the door, she goes into hallway and towards Max's door, she opens it and steps in the room, closing the door behind her.

She goes towards Max's bed and nudges her sleeping form, "Max, Max wake up."

Max opens her eyes, "Jane?" She reaches for her lamp and turns in on, lighting that part of the room, "What's up?"

Jane immediately breaks down into tears, Max sits up in her bed, "Hey what's wrong?"

"I... I'm... so... sorry..." she cries, Max gets out her bed and takes her in her arms, holding her tight. Jane reciprocates the hug, and places her chin on her friend's shoulder, still crying, "What I said was wrong and stupid and I am so so sorry." Max pulls away and takes Jane's face in her hands, "It's okay Jane, really, but please, you need to talk to someone."

Jane nods, "I will, I will I promise," she tries her best to smile. Max doesn't know if she believes her, but knows it isn't worth arguing over, not tonight.

...

A man with a stature of 6'3 walks into a room full of scientists, he is wearing a dark blue denim jacket, camo pants, and a black shirt, clearly not a fan of science, more a fan of brute force. He approaches a group of people, one of whom sees him coming, "Grigori."

"Alexei."

The two Russians shake hands. Behind Alexei the General and his two fellow officers approach, "So this is the guy you were talking about Doc?"

"Yes sir."

"Well, I had no idea you were bringing in Arnold Schwarzenegger," the General laughs, trying to joke with the giant man, who just looks at him with zero expression on his face. The General stops smiling and gulps.

Okay, the General thinks to himself, this guy doesn't joke around.

The Russian turns to look at Alexei, "What am I doing here?"

"We need you to find something for us."

"And what's in it for me? I don't work for you guys, I'm a gun for hire."

The officer standing to his left sighs, "Listen pal, what's in it for you is that you continue to live on US soil, and not get sent back to that frozen hellhole you came from," Grigori doesn't look at the officer, but definitely hears everything he's saying, "So why don't you shut up and listen to what the good doc-" he gets cut off by a hand quickly clenching around his throat, stopping him from breathing. The soldiers all raise their guns, ready for the order. The officer grabs hold of the arm holding his neck as he lifted off the floor, Grigori still looking at Alexei.

"This one talks too much, I don't like people who talk too much, especially," his grip tightens, "One's that contribute to nothing, except being an asshole."

"Okay pal," the General intervenes, "Let's just all calm down," he says looking at the soldiers, he moves his hand in a downward motion, telling them to put their guns down, which they do with great hesitation. He looks back to Grigori, "We'll talk about your payment, but first can you put friend down, I wouldn't want to tell his family that he died because he was a dumbass, so could you let him go?"

"Very well," he drops the officer, who doubles over coughing, trying to get air into his lungs.

"There, I let him go, now, let's talk."

6. Chapter 6

Jane opens the door to the house, and instantly sees what's wrong, the fridge is open, its contents on the floor, someone has been here.

"What the hell?" Max says from behind her.

"My thoughts exactly," Max's parents and Billy would be gone for the next few days, so who the hell caused this?

They hear a noise from Jane's room. They walk towards the door cautiously, Max picking up her dad's bat along the way. They reach the door, Jane places her hand on the door knob, looks to her friend, who nods letting her know she's ready, and she swings open the door, and they are met by the boy from the woods, staring at them with wide eyes.

"Busted asshole!" Max says pointing the bat at him.

Jane looks at him, he's kinda cute, what? Did she really just think that? She looks at what he's holding in his hands, the picture of her mom, "What are you doing with that?"

He looks at the picture, "Who is it?"

"None of your business that's who!"

He smiles, "She's pretty."

"What?"

"She's pretty."

Jane doesn't know what to say, this random person just complimented her mother.

"What are you doing here?" Max asks.

He places the picture back on the cabinet, "I had nowhere else to go, I didn't mean to steal from you, I'm sorry."

The girls look at each other, what is going on?

"Who are you?" Jane asks, the boy doesn't answer, "Okay, just wait here," she takes Max out the room and shuts the door.

"What are you doing?" The redhead asks.

"We need to discuss what we're going to do with him."

"What? It's obvious, we're going to kick him out."

"Hold on, okay, he said he didn't have anywhere else to go and-

"Not our problem."

"-and I don't think he was stealing from us because he wanted to, but because he had to."

"So what you want is to let him stay here is that what you're saying?"

"Yes."

Max's eyes go wide, "Are you insane?"

"Come on Max you saw how scared he looked when we found him, I doubt a thief would look that scared."

Max furrows her brow, "Is this because he called your mom pretty?"

"What? No."

"It is isn't it?"

"No it's just," she sighs, "I feel like the right thing to do is to let him crash here for a few days, it's just going to be us two so there won't be any problem."

"You are actually serious?"

"Yes, I am."

Max sees the look on her friend's face, she's not kidding.

She sighs, "Alright fine, fine."

She opens the door, and sees the boy sitting on the bed, "We've decided, against all logic, that you can stay here for a few days," the boy smiles, "Thank you."

Max shakes her head, "Whatever," and walks off to her room. Jane moves towards the boy, "What's your name?"

The boy looks at her weirdly, "What's a name?"

"You don't know what a name is?"

He shakes his head.

"Okay, uh, a name is what you're called, like my name's Jane," she points in the direction of Max's room, "That's Max." She thinks for a moment, "How about we call you, Mike?"

He nods, liking the sound of that.

Jane smiles, "Well nice to meet you Mike."

He smiles back, "Nice to meet you Jane."